

G B P A MISSI B N S

Easter 2023 A.D. Our Lady's Mission Volume 32 Issue 02

The Divine Paradox

"Behold, I make all things new."

In Mel Gibson's *Passion of the Christ*, Our Lord says this to His mother as He carries His cross to Golgotha. What possible sense can such a statement make as Jesus is on His way to die?

It is yet another paradox from the Messiah who told His audiences to be poor because the kingdom of heaven is theirs, to rejoice when persecuted and to lose their lives in order to find them. It is also an expression of hope.

Everything Jesus did was for the sake of identifying with His human creatures and modeling the way they should live. As our "faithful high priest" (see Heb 2:17), familiar with our weaknesses. He accepted being conceived in a woman, born into poverty, maturing and being educated as all children are and working at a job. Then, at age thirty. He undertook the mission for which He had become one of us: to call us back to our Creator, to be reconciled with Him and to live in union with Him, as we had first been intended to do. In short, Christ came to divinize human beings.

When we look at the life of Jesus Christ, we should see "One like us in all things except sin"

(Heb 4:15) and realize that that is what we had originally been meant to be. Adam and Eve, our first parents, were originally sinless. We were meant to live with God in intimate union, as they had in the Garden of Eden before the Fall, and to live forever with Him. We were made "a little lower than the angels" (Ps 8:5)! Do we have any conception of the heights for which we were created and from which we have fallen? Jesus came to model for us what we were made to be and to give us the grace (i.e., the Holy Spirit) to be it. That is mercy!



How did Jesus accomplish making "all things new"?

He died. He offered His life to the Father for all of us. He did it, not just as atonement for all the wrongs we humans had committed against God but as an example of what we are to do. Recall the phrase, "Offer it up." When we offer our sufferings to God, we are imitating Jesus' sacrifice. We join Him in atoning for the sins of the world. We are giving ourselves on behalf of others. And we are giving ourselves to the Father.

He was laid in a tomb. Some day when we die, we will surrender our bodies to the grave. Jesus did not make Himself an exception. He remained in the tomb for three days. We will be in that in-between state for a period of time, as well. We will undergo suffering in purgatory and/or a time of bliss or the unquenchable flames of hell as we await the Final Judgment.

He rose from the dead. Christ's spirit rejoined His body. At the Last Judgment, our souls and bodies will be reunited and our fates decided in the Second Death. Those who loved the Lord and have been purified, either on earth or in purgatory, will have glorified bodies with which to enjoy

the new heaven and the new earth. Those who hate God will continue to suffer, with their bodies, in the fires of hell. There are no more options.

For those who have made the effort to imitate Christ, our reward will be the eternal Eden, forever in fellowship with our Lord. We will enjoy the ecstasy of what "no eye has seen, nor ear heard or even entered into the heart of man...[the] things God has prepared for those who love Him" (*I Cor 2:9*).

—Dawn Sanders

GOSPA MISSIONS

Mission Statement: Gospa Missions is a nonprofit organization headquartered in Evans City, PA. It was established in A.D. 1990 for the purpose of evangelizing the world's people to the Catholic Church. Gospa Missions is dedicated to serving our Lord, spreading devotion to His Blessed Mother and general faith-building. We are obedient to our bishop, spiritual directors and the Magisterium.

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Gospa Missions' religious goods store, Amazing Grace, is also available for your conference or event.

This newsletter is dedicated to the Holy Spirit. May we always do God's will.

A Message from Mary Rutkoski ... and a Reprint from Thomas Rutkoski

Greetings from all of us!

Tom's editorial this time (*June 2000*) is about how much he loved to sing the beautiful hymns at church. In fact, he picked out the song that he really loved—and, in case you don't know the song, it is *How Can I Keep from Singing?* He has also put several rows of the lyrics for you in his editorial. You'll see them below.

Tom is completely happy to admit that he isn't a great singer, but he never stopped trying to do the very best he could because he knew that, when he sang, he was talking to God. This meant everything to him. It made him sad when other people didn't care to sing to God.

Tom's editorial about singing in church (and so much more) has very strong words that you will see as you read. Think about what he said.

He has so much in this writing that he even amazes me. He knew that there are many different ways of singing in church, several of which did not make him joyful. He doubted they made God joyful, either.

He asks that you really try to sing. Try talking to God as you sing. It may amaze you, too.

Thank you.

And now it's Tom's turn.

How Can I Keep From Singing?

by Thomas Rutkoski

It is said they who sing to God are praying twice. I feel that way because of the joy it brings to my heart. And believe me, I cannot sing. If someone hits a sour note, my voice goes for that missed key like a bass for a jitterbug. But that does not stop me from singing.

I've noticed something. Now that I am over the fear of sounding bad and I *try* to sing in church, I am getting better. At first, I could not carry a tune in a bucket and, after trying, I actually hit a few notes correctly now and then.



I feel really bad when only a few people sing in church. It may be too selfish, but I want to have people outside the church hear us singing so joyfully that they want to come in. Sort of the way they did in the movie *Sister Act*. Wouldn't it be great if we sang that way?

I have witnessed some stumbling blocks to our becoming good singers in church. One is the whiner. Now, for this whine to have an impact, you must alter your voice a bit when you read it and make it sound like you are whining. Give it a bit of a nasal sound and draw the words out. Now try it, *Why do we have to sing all of the verses?* Was that you I heard say that in church the other day? I almost turned around and addressed the issue with you. It should be a joy to sing to God. The more we do it the better we will get. Practice makes perfect. If we do not try to sing, we will never learn.

And then there are the "lippers." They just move their lips but no sound actually comes out. Well, that is better than the non-singers, but just barely.

I understand when we go to Heaven all we will do is sing and praise God all day long. If you don't want to do it now, maybe you won't get to do it later. We gather at Mass as a community to sing and praise God *together*. The church tells us at certain points to sing and for good reason. Move forward in your spiritual journey and get with the program.

And now there are those who say—and you have to slip into your whiner voice

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again—I don't want to sing. I want to pray! The immaturity of it all. You miss the point of singing and regress in your spiritual walk. Singing to and about God is prayer. Did you ever think you might insult God by saying that you don't want to sing? I personally have heard people say they don't like music during Communion because they want to talk to God. EXCUSE ME! When we sing to and about God we are talking to Him.

Possibly you are not understanding the words of the songs. Take the hymnal and read the songs as you would read or say a prayer. Most are profoundly spiritual and many times they are scripture put to music. Find that same joy of prayer in the music and multiply it times two.

There is one song I particularly like and, ironically, it is called *How Can I Keep From Singing?* These are some of the lyrics:

Through all the tumult and the strife, I hear the music ringing. It sounds and echoes in my soul. How can I keep from singing? No storm can shake my inmost calm, while to that Rock I'm clinging. If love is Lord of Heaven and earth, How can I keep from singing?

With the love that Jesus has for me, I ask you, "How can I keep from singing?"

The next time you attend Mass, pick up the hymnal and try. Just try and see if you don't feel better. SING!

Rutkoski Mary

Thomas Rutkoski

...and Mary

Our Lady's **Power Hour**

with reflections by His Excellency Bishop Joseph Strickland

We will be praying for our families, our Church and our country WEDNESDAY NIGHTS at 9pm EST

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Reviving the Faith

GOSPA MISSIONS RETREAT

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Our featured speakers are:

- —His Excellency William Waltersheid, Auxiliary Bishop, Diocese of Pittsburgh
- —Rev. Canon Matthew Talarico, Rector of the Shrine of Christ the King in Chicago
- —Dr. Raymond Guarendi, psychologist, author, host of Living Right With Dr. Ray on EWTN
- —Chris Reynolds, President, Gospa Missions

SAVE THE DATE

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Highfield Community Center 229 Highfield Road, Butler, PA 16001

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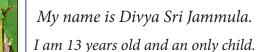
for the less fortunate?



Divya is a poor child in India.

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My father is too ill to work so my mother has to split her time between caring for him and working in the fields. We are grateful that I can attend Mary Rose Buds School and live at Mother Theresa Orphanage. I really enjoy my English and Science classes.

Could you be my sponsor?

Mother Theresa and St. Thomas Orphangages in Cherukupalli, India cares for dozens of children whose parents have either died or are so destitute that they cannot provide for their children's basic needs. Besides the children in the orphanages, our school — Mary Rose Buds in India provides hundreds of needy children with food, uniforms.

and a life-changing education. All this for only 65 cents a day per child!

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INDIA: Celebrations & Thanks

Easter Blessings to All!

There have been a number of celebrations lately at our campus in Cherukupalli, as you can see in the photos below. The children enjoyed carrying their candles around in procession for the Feast of the Presentation, also known as Candlemas, held on February 2nd. Also, the Ninth grade class and teachers arranged a party for the departing Tenth graders with the theme of Grateful Gratitude. Additional thanksgiving was celebrated when Fr. Allam's former Tenth grade colleagues showed up for a reunion. Of course, all this was accompanied by singing, dancing, speeches and skits.

Also, the convent has now been repainted inside and out, making the sisters happier and the campus more lovely. All the necessary repairs and painting of the buildings and grounds have now been completed.

The children will soon be completing their school year and enjoying a month's vacation before returning in June. Thank you for making all this joy and well-being possible! May God bless you abundantly!

—Remy Schoone & Dawn Sanders

Candlemas Celebration



Candlemas procession heading from street into school campus



End of procession



Reunion

Fr. Allam (center) receiving ceremonial cape and garland from his former classmates



Convent Painting





Now





Now

10th Grade Send-Off

Below right, Ninth grade girls and boys performing in honor of their Tenth grade classmates





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A Servant's Heart: The Joy of Singing at Mass

Over the years, I have been to many churches across the country and have seen many different forms of musical worship, some good and some not so good. On my journey back to the Faith twenty-four years ago, the first Mass I remember attending was a charismatic Life Teen Mass. This was a complete shock to my senses but there were some very faith-filled teens and young adults in attendance. As I grew in my Faith and under-

standing of the Mass, my senses slowly changed and I felt more at home with good Catholic hymns whose melodies and words were familiar to me. I came to the realization that having a band or musicians in the front, kind of performing, distracted

I know I will not be popular for saying this but we have lost the sense of *sacred* in *sacred music* in many Catholic churches. Let us remember that everything connected with the liturgy was done intentionally through years of Councils and centuries of tradition. Pope Pius X, in *Tra le sollecitudini*, states this about sacred music:

Sacred music, being a complementary part of the solemn liturgy, participates in the general scope of the liturgy, which is the glory of God, the sanctification and edification of the faithful. It contributes to the decorum and the splendor of the ecclesiastical ceremonies and, since its principal office is to clothe with suitable melody the liturgical text proposed for the understanding of the faithful, its proper aim is to add greater efficacy to the text in order that, through it, the faithful many be more easily moved to devotion and better disposed for the reception of the fruits of grace belonging to the celebration of the most holy mysteries.

The music at Mass is to inspire us towards the divine, much as the shape of the church and its grand scale is to inspire us towards heaven. Hymns that have been around for centuries have been around because they meet until the final verse is sung. At one of his first Masses, our new organist had us sing all ten verses of *Immaculate Mary* and everyone was singing until the end. During the summer when the windows are open, the joyful music in worship to our Lord is heard throughout the neighborhood.

As I read Tom's editorial, *How*Can I Keep from Singing, it brought
back a flood of memories of my
time here in 2000 when

we would attend daily Mass up the hill at St. Matthias. We would sing that song, I Received the Living God, after Communion without accompani-

ment. It was early and everyone's voices were not warmed up but the daily Mass attendees sang anyway, out of joy for starting our day with the reception of Jesus in the Eucharist. I loved it and the sweet memory with Tom warmed my heart.

As we go into the Joyful season of Easter, why don't we start by asking, "Is this music bringing me into a deeper worship of the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass?" If it is not, why not start speaking up and asking for beautiful Catholic music and, of course, ask to sing all the verses. As a footnote, my kids would cringe when they didn't sing all the verses because I would continue, in hopes the choir would finish the song since each verse has meaning and the last one may have the biggest message never heard.

—Chris Reynolds President, Gospa Missions

Don't miss Chris's video logs at gospa.org and abodeforchildren.org



Scripture, are based on a particular Psalm, and the verses work together to complete the sharing of faith. (An argument for singing all the verses, which some parishes do without fail and others just stop once the priest has recessed from the Nave.) I am not a theological historian but I would venture to guess that, hundreds of years ago, people knew the words to hymns before they could read them and so the music at Mass served as another catechesis, much as the pictures in stained glass windows or the Stations

the criteria. They have excerpts of

the senses purposefully.

The Church has defined and instructed what is proper and what is not. It has also directed what are proper instruments to bring the beauty of sacred music to the Sacred Liturgy. I am blessed with my parish here in Cincinnati because the music is beautiful, sung from the choir loft with an organ and, sometimes, violins. They sing all the verses and most of the people—and I mean most—stay

of the Cross. Catholicism appeals to all

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He is Risen!

Smiling Jesus 11" x 13" Picture



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301-0296.....\$23.95

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An adorable plush lamb makes a perfect gift for a baby or young child. Its wooly legs join in prayer and, when its tummy is pushed, it plays *Jesus Loves Me.* 11" H. Wipes clean with a damp cloth.

650-0111.....\$17.50

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Z391018.....\$35.00

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S18324.....\$63.00

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10" Pearlized Crucifix



400-0259.....\$59.95

S3188CR18......\$72.00

Shine Some Light with Decorative Candles!

Our Lady of Grace Devotional Wax Candle



Made of the highest quality paraffin, this vintage-style candle features *Our Lady of Grace* in an elegant wax relief design with hand-decorated metallic gold wax accents. Clean, soot-free burn. 8"H. 2.5" D.

204-0070.....\$35.50

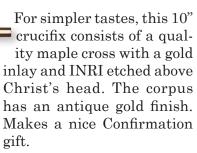
LED Candle – Be Still and Know

Enjoy the realistic glow of this beautiful wax-finished, LED candle. Has 6-hour timer that can be switched on and off. Unscented. 6"H. 3" D.

204-0068.....\$21.00



10" Walnut Finish Crucifix



400-0280.....\$23.95

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Prophets of a Future Not Our Own

It helps now and then to step back and take the long view. The Kingdom is not only beyond our efforts, it is even beyond our vision. We accomplish in our lifetime only a tiny fraction of the magnificent enterprise that is God's work. Nothing we do is complete, which is another way of saying that the kingdom always lies beyond us. No statement says all that could be said. No prayer fully expresses our faith. No confession brings perfection. No pastoral visit brings wholeness. No program accomplishes the Church's mission. No set of goals and objectives includes everything. This is what we are about: We plant seeds that one day will grow. We water seeds already planted, knowing that they hold future promise. We lay foundations that will need further development. We provide yeast that produces effects beyond our capabilities. We cannot do everything, and there is a sense of liberation in realizing that. This enables us to do something, and to do it very well. It may be incomplete, but it is a beginning, a step along the way, an opportunity for God's grace to enter and do the rest. We may never see the end results, but that is the difference between the master builder and the worker. We are workers, not Master Builders, ministers, not Messiahs.

—Bishop Kenneth Untener

Thank You for 18 Years of Service

Through the years, Dawn has gone far and beyond expectations in her work for *Gospa Missions* and *Abode for Children*. She not only did our newsletters but ANY task that needed done. From stuffing envelopes to entering sponsorship payments, she turned no task away. She has been with us through a lot of changes and embraced them all, remaining steadfast in her work.

Her kindness and love for the Lord has truly shown through her work. Whenever there was something to be done, she would always offer to do it. Whenever someone else was struggling, she would always be there to lend a hand. Few people realize we don't just focus on the store or the office work but on the people we connect with through our daily work. We try to be a witness to them and bring them closer to God and Dawn is great at this. Whenever someone called in for a prayer request, she would make sure to mention the entire request details at Divine Mercy. Not only that, she would remember their story and every time they called, but she would also listen to their updates with genuine concern in their struggles.

Whenever she waited on a customer, she would listen to their story with genuine interest and offer encouragement or to pray for them. Her kindness/selflessness towards the people here is something that I'm sure will never be forgotten. She has been an invaluable member of our family here at *Gospa Missions* and she will be greatly missed. But even though we will miss her, we only want the best for her. We hope she will be blessed in this new step of her life and that she has the most wonderful time of her life, for she deserves nothing less.

Thank you, Dawn, for being such an excellent part of *Gospa Missions*.

The Staff of Gospa Missions & Abode for Children

God Bless You and Keep You!

First, thank you for reading to the very end of this newsletter. It has been a privilege and a source of great graces to have been the editor/graphic designer of the *Gospa Missions Newsletter* these past eighteen-and-a-half years. Thank you, too, all for your kind comments and encouragement over the years. It blessed me to know that something I included or wrote blessed you.

We are prophets of a future not our own. Amen.

I also enjoyed helping with *Abode for Children*.

When I started, Tom Rutkoski had not yet been diagnosed with multiple myeloma so I have many fond memories of his vigor, deep spirituality and wonderful sense of humor as he guided the good ship, *Gospa Missions*. He truly was an inspiration and a model for me.

At one point, Tom asked me if I was going to stay or leave, like some others were at the time. I replied that I would be staying until the Lord told me otherwise. He was very appreciative of that. As he struggled through all the pain and craziness of his illness, God supplied the grace

to keep the doors of the *Mission* open.

I admired his bravery in the face of such a painful disease and the often painful treatments, too. Despite feeling so physically weak and ill, he was always the evangelist who couldn't wait to reach out to his fellow sufferers at each doctor's appointment. He just had to tell them about the good, good God who had rescued him from spiritual death so that he didn't have to fear the physical one. And, of course, he also had to tell them all about his wonderful Mother, the Blessed Virgin, as well!

And so, now that the Lord has told me it's time to move on, I give Him thanks for all the blessings He has brought me while I've been here: Tom, Mary, Chris, all my co-workers over the years and the great customers and callers who have shared their stories with us. May God bless and keep all of you!



—Dawn Sanders

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